UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.109/PV.1369
5 September 1990

ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1369th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 13 August 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before we take up our programmed agenda for today I should like to remind Committee members that according to our programme of work, contained in aide-mémoire 17/90, our summer session is scheduled to close on 15 August. Therefore it would appear at this stage that unless the Committee decides otherwise or agrees to hold some night meetings, we have no more than six meetings, including this one, to complete our work.

As members know, the remaining tasks include the following:

First, we must take a decision on the reports of the two seminars organized by the Committee, in Vanuatu and Barbados, in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Secondly, we must agree on a draft resolution or declaration to mark the thirtieth anniversary. The text for the twenty-fifth anniversary, which has been distributed by the Secretariat, could serve as a basis for our consideration of this matter.

Thirdly, we still have to agree on three draft resolutions on: the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies; foreign economic and other interests; and military activities and arrangements. The Bureau and other Committee members have been consulting for some time on the working papers relating to these items. I understand that very little progress has been made in those consultations and that no agreement that could lead to a consensus decision is in sight. The open-ended informal consultation meeting suggested by some delegations, which was held on these items on Friday 10 August, yielded, I understand, very little result. Under the circumstances I can only reiterate my appeal to members to intensify their efforts to reach an agreement as soon as possible on the draft

(The Chairman)

texts before them. In that connection I understand from the Secretariat that even if an agreement on those draft texts were reached late today, their processing, including translation into all the languages, might not be completed overnight in view of the length of those documents. Therefore, taking into account the 24-hour rule, the Committee might not be able to take a decision on those draft texts until Thursday. The Committee may wish to review its programme of work accordingly.

Lastly, also remaining is consideration of the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas); the question of New Caledonia; the question of Gibraltar; the Special Committee decision of 17 August 1989 concerning Puerto Rico and the related hearing of concerned organizations; and the question of Western Sahara.

I have been informed by the Secretariat that owing to circumstances beyond its control, the working paper on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) will not be issued until tomorrow morning and that, for the same reasons, the one on Gibraltar, might not be available before Thursday morning. Meanwhile, as programmed, we shall hear petitioners and organizations concerned this morning.

Does any member wish to comment, bearing in mind, as noted in aide-mémoire 17/90, that our programme of work is subject to modifications as necessary and appropriate?

Mr. CISTERNAS (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Thank you, Sir, for the information. Of course, we should all like the session to be as brief as possible, but my delegation is fully aware that you, through your wise guidance, and the Secretariat, by providing the necessary documentation, have done everything possible to ensure that the Committee gets its documents on time. If that has not occurred, it is because of force majeure. For its part, my delegation would have no difficulty working for a few days beyond the original schedule, and we support your appeal to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretariat has taken note of repeated appeals to get our papers ready in time, and it is exerting the maximum effort to do so.

Mr. ANVIRE (Côte d'Ivoire) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I think that all delegations here are aware of the efforts you and the Secretariat have made to try to ensure that our work is carried out in accordance with the original schedule. But much essential work remains to be done, and for our part we would prefer to see our session extended by a few days, as just suggested by the representative of Chile, so that we can adopt the draft texts still outstanding.

Last Friday, Sir, when you enabled members to conduct informal consultations, we had been unable to examine all the texts. With your permission, we would like to continue working along those lines with a view to concluding our work.

Mrs. BERMUDEZ GARCIA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation shares your concerns, Mr. Chairman, and could support any suggestion you might make with respect to extending the session by a few days. But I should like to suggest the possibility of adding meetings following our scheduled meetings of today and tomorrow, since important work remains; if we make no progress today and tomorrow, I doubt that we shall be in a position to end our session even by Friday.

The CHAI MAN: I thank members for their co-operation and understanding. As far as the working papers are concerned, not too many remain to be considered, and the Secretariat will try to distribute them in good time.

At this point I need to stress the problem we face with respect to reaching agreement on the three draft resolutions, which we consider to be very important.

(The Chairman)

As far as expediting that process is concerned, that also, I think, rests with the members of the Committee. As members know, we have already carried out two or three rounds of informal consultations in addition to the one held by the extended Bureau. Those informal consultations were open-ended to facilitate the participation of as large a membership as possible.

We had hoped that, on most of the items, agreement would be obtained early so that we could proceed with the programme as intended. Unfortunately that has not happened, and I think members are aware of the difficulties we are facing with regard to arriving at agreement on the resolutions, which I think emanate mainly from two angles: first, the need to consider changing circumstances at the global and regional levels and in individual territories, or with regard to individual items concerned; secondly, while doing so we must not sacrifice the basic principles related to the Committee's mandate and indeed to the process of decolonization, and without any diminishing concern we must focus the Committee's attention on the remaining Terroritories, comprised mainly of island Territories in the Pacific and Caribbean regions.

With that in mind, I think that if we can proceed wherever possible to make changes, shorten paragraphs, streamline texts, and consolidate wherever possible - at the same time in no way diminishing our shared concerns and not sacrificing our basic principles but addressing joint concerns and trying to reconcile positions with a view to coming to some agreement prior to the deadlines - we can enable the Secretariat to prepare the necessary final papers for consideration.

I should also like to point out the need to look into other ongoing activities that engage the Secretariat in the preparation of these documents.

I would therefore once again appeal to members to use this afternoon's open-ended consulations effectively so that we shall at least be able to hammer out the difficulties we face in coming to an agreement and see whether at the end of

the day we shall be able to give the Secretariat the kind of paper it can work with. Matters now rest mainly with the members of the Committee. We have tried other possibilities but they have not expedited our work. It remains for us to use our collective wisdom and joint efforts to manage, it possible, within the programme intended.

Depending on the outcome of this afternoon's meeting, I hope that when the Committee meets tomorrow morning, taking into account the observations made by members today and the amount of work that needs to be accomplished, it might then decide on the course of action it wishes to take.

If that is agreeable, we shall proceed to the next item.

It was so decided.

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS) (A/AC.109/L.1743)

The CHAIRMAN: I understand from the Secretariat that the working paper on this item will be issued tomorrow in document A/AC.109/1042.

The Committee has before it a draft resolution (A/AC.109/L.1743), to which members' attention was drawn at the 1368th meeting, on 9 August.

I wish to inform members that I have received a request from the delegation of Argentina to partipate in the Committee's consideration of the item. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee accedes to that request.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the delegation of Argentina took a place at the Committee table.

Mrs. BERMUDEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation would like to reiterate the statement made by 20 Latin American States on 2 September 1983 at the 1238th meeting of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly with regard to the lack of representativity of British petitioners residing in the Malvinas. Since then this statement has been repeated at every session of that Committee and this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the decisions taken at the 1363rd and 1366th meetings, on 1 and 8 August respectively, the Committee granted requests for hearing, contained in aide-mémoire 21/90 and Add.1, to Mr. T. J. Peck, Mr. D. L. Clifton, Mr. Hugo Warneford Thomson and Mr. Alexander Betts.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Peck, Mr. Clifton, Mr. Thomson and Mr. Betts took places at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Peck.

Mr. PECK: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on behalf of Falkland Islanders.

Ny name is Terence Peck. I was born in August 1938 and educated at Stanley, Falkland Islands. I qualified as plumber/heating engineer before joining the Falkland Islands Police Force. I served 21 years before retiring, in 1980. For 14 of those years I was Chief Police Officer. I entered the political arena in October 1981. On the night of 1 April 1982 I was recalled for service with the Police Department. In the early hours of 2 April, Argentine military forces invaded my country. Myself and others were held prisoners for some hours before being released. As the days passed the Argentine military increased their numbers and began strengthening their fortifications. I was compelled to escape into the mountains to avoid being taken prisoner by the infamous militia. I spent my time - some five weeks - collecting information about the Argentine enemy positions. Wherever possible, acts of sabotage were carried out. When our British forces landed, I joined ranks with them, being officially attached to the third parachute battalion. My battalion was successful in many actions against the Argentine enemy, not the least of them being the battle of Mount Longdon. As the world knows, the Argentine invaders were defeated and subsequently removed from our country. My services to the third parachute battalion were recognized with an award bestowed on me by Her Majesty the Queen.

(Mr. Peck)

In 1981, I was elected to the Legislative and Executive Councils. I held that office for the next three years. I successfully stood for election in October 1989 and was once again elected to the Executive Council. The 1989 elections were held amid a growing awareness in the community that whoever was elected had to be strong, firm and prepared to make the right decisions. The election candidates were, without exception, standing completely solid on the issue of our sovereignty. The elections were given a lot of international coverage by the media for a number of reasons: the exceptionally high percentage of the population that voted; the unusually large number of candidates; and the united stand against the Argentine claim of sovereignty over our Islands.

Our present Government - that is, I and the other seven elected councillors, aided by the administrative staff - has the confidence of our people. My responsibilities include housing, planning and building, and the police advisory board. Greater autonomy is demonstrated by the elected members of the Legislative Council. Many of the offices once filled by contract personnel from overseas are now held by Falkland Islanders.

In the private sector, increased development has been taking place. New housing is being provided by our Government but mostly by the private sector. Already, housing in Stanley has increased by 33.3 per cent within the last six and half years. New properties are being imported and erected on a very large scale. Islanders are returning home, and people who have been on contract, either to the Government or to other sectors, have elected to settle in the Islands, the main reason for this being a secure and stable future for them and their families.

The Falkland Islands has until recent years been a self-supporting country, sheep-farming having been a successful source of revenue for the Islands' economy. The middle to late 1970s were a difficult period owing to increased world-wide

(Mr. Peck)

inflation. Nevertheless, the community persevered and efforts were made to diversify the economy. At the beginning of 1980, subdivision of the larger farms was begun. Apart from the violation of our sovereign territory by Argentina in April to June 1982, that programme has been continued with great success. Young Islanders now own their own farms. From a total of 32 farms at the end of 1979, we have today increased local ownership to 93 farms. The subdivision of farms has not only brought improvement in the form of increased production but also has contributed to improved quality of stock and development on a much increased scale throughout the Islands.

During the latter part of the 1980s, considerable revenue was raised by opening a fisheries conservation zone and by the allocation of licences. Only this month, a delegation from the Falkland Islands Government held fruitful discussions at Tokyo with nationals of Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Our purpose is to continue to exercise the utmost control over the fishing within our fisheries conservation zone and also to extend beyond that by a voluntary restraint agreement with nationals of other countries.

Conservation in the South-West Atlantic is of the utmost importance for ourselves, Argentina and fishing nations. We, the Falkland Islands Government, have since the bilateral talks at Madrid, in October 1989 and February 1990, made available to Argentina via Her Majesty's Government important scientific data relating to fish stocks in those waters. Reciprocal data of an equivalent quality have not been forthcoming from Argentina. The Falkland Islands Government has agreed that our Director of Fisheries should take part in dicussions with the Argentine delegation. The Falkland Islands Government finances the scientific study that provides that important information.

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(Mr. Peck)

Mention must also be made of the increase in tourist travel to our Islands. We have continued to expand in that area. Within the past decade, but especially in the past four years, hotels, guest-houses, shops, cafés and restaurants have flourished. We shall continue to promote and support such worthy enterprises.

A comprehensive development programme to create new roads, services, telecommunications, a new senior school and extensions to the junior and primary schools, a swimming pool and a community centre has been under way for some years. An important component is the programme to extend and build roads throughout the Islands over the next five years. That will offer greater potential for the future expansion of our development programme to improve our economy.

Regarding education, a new comprehensive senior school will enable students to remain at home instead of attending schools overseas. We will continue to encourage our students to attend colleges or universities for advanced studies and qualifications. That has been part of our Government's programme for many years. In addition, we have sent and will continue to send our young people overseas to attend specialist studies and training to enable them to gain necessary qualifications. A number of senior posts have already been filled by local people. Within two years, our internal air service will consist entirely of local pilots, technicians, engineers and administrative staff. As with every developing country, it takes time for people to obtain the necessary skills and professionalism to fill such positions as medical and nursing staff, teachers and civil engineers, to name but a few. We are endeavouring to do that today.

Criticism of the Falkland Islands is often made by people out of touch with the realities of life within the Falkland Islands. We, as the Government, decide on policies, control our finances and determine our future. No one else decides for us. We live in a democratic society, free to choose our own elected Government

(Mr. Peck)

and free to decide our own future. We have for the last 160 years freely chosen to live in our own Islands. My ancestors - and I am a fifth-generation Islander - went of their own free will to settle in the islands and make a way of life for themselves and their offspring.

Argentina continues to threaten our way of life. We as a people and a country will continue to grow with foreign investment, but that could be inhibited because of the Argentine claim to our Islands. Why, I ask, does the Committee refuse to abide by Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations? Why does it not recognize our rights? We are a people. We do have a right to decide our future as people and country. The right to self-determination is recognized by the Committee, and we too should therefore have its support. We have always had our own identity, and we wish to retain it. We never have been and never will be a part of Argentina. We have nothing in common with it, either culturally or politically.

During the past week, we have seen larger nations violate other countries' sovereign territories. The United Nations has condemned such action, and rightly so. We are a small nation, friendly and hospitable. We enjoy the friendship of other nationalities and they enjoy ours. That was demonstrated very clearly just last week, when I attended at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's twentieth regional conference in Belize. All the Caribbean islands of the Commonwealth - with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago - and Belize and Guyana were represented. They all recognized the sovereign rights of the Falkland Islands. Likewise, many of the larger Commonwealth nations recognize those rights. In April of this year, I, as a representative of the Falkland Islands Government, was invited to take part in the ministerial drugs summit held at London. I had my place among other national delegates. In fact, my position was only three seats removed from that of the Argentine delegation.

(Mr. Peck)

To conclude, I respectfully invite members of the Committee to examine very carefully their motives and reasons for not recognizing the right to self-determination of my people and country as laid down by Article 1 of the United Nations Charter. The failure of the United Nations and this Committee to recognize this fact is politically and morally wrong and in contravention of the Charter.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Clifton.

Mr. CLIFTON: I thank the Special Committee for giving me this opportunity to address it and to speak to the draft resolution before it.

I have been asked to speak here today by the elected members of the Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands. I speak as a resident of the Falkland Islands.

My name is Lewis Clifton. I am a Falkland Islander of 34 years. Until recently I was the representative of the Falkland Islands Government in London. Prior to that I was an elected member of the Islands Legislative Council and also served on the Executive Council. In that capacity I spoke on the question of the Falkland Islands during the debates in 1985 and 1986 in the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. I am currently a student.

My forebears came to the Islands from Great Britain, and Scandinavia, in the late 1800s and my family has lived continuously in the Islands since that time. There can be little doubt that they, with many others of their time, chose to live and settle in the Islands because of the opportunities and peacefulness afforded in a land they and their children called home.

During the early days of the Islands' settlement, relationships were established with other areas of the region: Chile, Uruguay and Patagonia. However, the orchestration of sovereignty claims on the Islands by Argentina since the 1940s has caused us to maintain a cautious distance and be apprehensive of our

(Mr. Clifton)

neighbour. As a consequence of Argentina's military invasion in 1982, Islanders have no desire to seek any political, cultural, educational or commercial relationships with that country.

Recent events in the Middle East remind us of how vulnerable a small, relatively defenceless country can be to the territorial ambitions of a more powerful neighbour. As a resident of the Falkland Islands in April 1982 I can only feel sympathy and understanding for the people of Kuwait.

Can there be little wonder that today, eight years after the invasion of our Islands, with the consequent loss of military and civilian life, we still wish to distance ourselves from Argentina, a country which continues to advocate, albeit now through peaceful diplomatic means, sovereignty claims on our Islands?

Frequently the small number and the extraction of our population are used as a means of suggesting that we do not enjoy the right to our home and the right to self-determination. The Falkland Islanders have lived peacefully in the Falkland Islands for well over 150 years. We have developed our own distinct culture and institutions. Of course, we choose to maintain our links with Great Britain, but we are also a people in our own right. The lifestyle that I and my fellow countrymen lead is indicative that we are neither down-trodden nor afraid to tell the world how we wish to conduct our own affairs.

The Falkland Islands Constitution Order of 1985 states that

> "All peoples have the right to self-determination and by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

Our Constitution further states that

> "the realization of the right of self-determination must be promoted and respected in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations."

(Mr. Clifton)

Despite the opinion of some who are quite ignorant of the facts of living in the Islands, Falkland Islanders do not suffer hardship or isolation because of not having a relationship with Argentina. Successful economic development and diversification, whilst maintaining the Islands' traditional way of life, have resulted in a decreasing dependence on external sources.

We have our own sophisticated and modern 28-bed hospital, which in addition to serving the Islands' needs provides for the many thousands of foreign fishermen who work offshore; we enjoy a twice-weekly air service to the United Kingdom, where we maintain and promote our social, commercial, cultural and political links; we have improved educational facilities and are shortly to build a modern secondary school at a cost of 10 million pounds which will further reduce external educational dependence. The latter and other current civilian construction projects are paid for solely from the revenue of the Falkland Islands.

The Islands no longer have to rely on economic aid packages such as those provided by Her Majesty's Government during the five-year period 1983 to 1988. We still enjoy limited external funding, primarily in the form of agricultural and educational grants, but we are otherwise entirely economically independent. Through the success of the Falkland Islands Interim Conservation and Management Zone - effective from February 1987 - the Islands enjoy economic stability and, more importantly, by international co-operation ensure the conservation of the marine resources in the South-West Atlantic.

Twelve countries are awarded fishing licences on an annual basis, and other nations are involved in ancillary support activities. We are striving to achieve voluntary restraint agreements with fishing nations in the areas of the 45th and 46th parallels beyond the maritime jurisdictions of both Argentina and the Falkland Islands. In this context, a delegation of Falkland Islands Government

(Mr. Clifton)

representatives has just concluded a series of successful exchanges in Tokyo with Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese fishing interests.

The Falkland Islands has since late 1989 provided the Argentine Government - through Her Majesty's Government - extensive scientific fisheries information. The bilateral accord reached in February in Madrid provides for working groups to meet on fisheries and for exchanges of information to take place. The Falkland Islands recognizes the need for enhanced conservation measures in the South-West Atlantic, and asks that Argentina reciprocate positively by supplying scientific information that is of equivalent substance and quality. Recently the Falkland Islands has agreed that its Director of Fisheries should be included in subsequent fisheries working group meetings. This will be beneficial to the process of marine conservation in the South-West Atlantic.

The revenue from fishing licences has improved the Islands' infrastructure and social and individual benefits. Salary remuneration, pensions and family supplements are now comparable with Western Europe. Living conditions are much enhanced and are the envy of many, particularly those outside the Islands who are unable to enjoy the freedoms of commercial, cultural and political activities, and where inflation is rampant. Island inflation for the year was estimated at 6.6 per cent.

Economic stability has been created through the success of the fishery, which subsequently has provided for economic independence. A very welcome byproduct of this is the return of many Islanders who left our islands when there were periods of political and economic uncertainty. The population has increased, as a census to be conducted in October will demonstrate.

(Mr. Clifton)

In 1983 the Falkland Islands agreed to an Argentine next-of-kin visit to the war cemetery. That offer was repeated many times, and indeed through various forums afforded in the United Nations. To these offers there was no acknowledgement from the Argentines until February of this year, when the Madrid bilateral accord put the matter in a written form which was then acceptable to Argentina. Seven months after the signing of that accord, little appears to have happened. I therefore urge Argentina to be as positive as the United Kingdom and the Falkland Islands and, for the prevention of human suffering, to ensure that a further austral summer is not wasted in this regard. The matter of permanent repatriation of Argentina's war dead should likewise be agreed upon.

Ignorant opinion would say that the Islands have evolved into a massive military fortification. This is not so. We welcome the minimal presence of the United Kingdom military forces, which provides a sufficient deterrent to keep aggressors distant from our shores, and we are happy to have that presence maintained for as long as we consider it necessary.

We are a threat to no one. We simply want to live our lives without pressure from Argentine sovereignty claims, or from other countries which seek to impose upon us political, social, educational and cultural practices which are totally alien to our community.

Our attitude towards Argentina is not negative. It is Argentina that seeks to assert its sovereignty claim. The removal of that claim would remove the annual Falkland question from this Committee and remove our long-term apprehension about that country.

Attendance at the Committee provides an opportunity to tell the world that we, the permanent residents of the Falkland Islands, have nothing to hide. We are quite prepared to continue attending sessions of the Committee to answer the criticisms levelled against us. I should like to draw the Committee's attention to

(Mr. Clifton)

the opening remarks made last year by the representative of Cuba about the lack of representativity from the Islands. There is no other story to be told, or heard, different from that given by Mr. Peck and myself.

The Falkland Islands welcomed the bilateral accord reached between the United Kingdom and Argentina in February. We were pleased that a formula could be found to put aside the Argentine sovereignty claim to our Islands under the umbrella of that accord. But the draft resolution before the Committee does nothing to gain Islanders' confidence. It is clearly little changed from previous resolutions and seeks to promote negotiations on sovereignty over our Islands between Her Majesty's Government and Argentina. Without exception, Falkland Islanders do not wish to see a change of British sovereign status, and I therefore urge the members of the Committee not to vote for the draft resolution. For so long as Argentina pursues its sovereignty claim over my homeland, Islanders will be ever more determined to remain forceful in their wish to maintain the status quo. In other words, we want no cultural, political, educational or social relationships with Argentina.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Thomson.

Mr. THOMSON: I am deeply grateful to be allowed to petition the Committee, and I thank its members for listening to me.

In a brief reference to myself, I wish to say that I was born in Buenos Aires. My mother was a first-generation Argentine whose father came to the country to develop an industry at the request of his Scottish brothers. My father was English. I received my primary education in the State schools of that time, subsequently being sent to Great Britain, as was usual for descendants of people of British origin. I returned to finish my secondary education and university studies in Argentina, receiving a doctorate in medicine. This was followed by post-graduate studies at Cleveland and Boston, in the United States, and in England.

(Mr. Thomson)

I come before you as an independent petitioner particularly interested in the settlement of the unfortunate sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands, a dispute which Argentina has protested down the years from the earliest history of the issue.*

As a member of the British community in Buenos Aires, I worked actively in the British Hospital, which was founded in 1844, for 40 years, becoming its Director General, for which I was honoured by the award of the Order of the British Empire (OBE). I wish to state that at no moment did I suffer any harassment of any kind by governmental or private institutions; on the contrary, I was always treated with kindness, owing to the respect that the average Argentine feels for a country that has had such close cultural and other ties with his country.

Since leaving the hospital, I have worked in a family business that has been closely connected to British business interests.

The British community in Argentina has played an active part in the development of that country, a part that goes back to the eighteenth century: at one time it was a very large economic group.

It is true that at the beginning of the last century Buenos Aires twice suffered an invasion by British troops. But this must be considered in the light of the historical situation of that time. Many officers and troops attracted by the country remained to swell the nascent community. When British capital helped to build the railways - which, incidentally, became one of the largest networks in the world - many employees remained and raised their families in Argentina. They and the many crews of British ships were the reason for the creation of the British Hospital.

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* Mr. Slaby (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Thomson)

Others, at the beginning of that period, fought in the battles of independence in the army and navy. The founder of our navy was an Irishman, Admiral Brown, of glorious memory. There are many families with English names whose ancestors were staunch supporters of the independence of Argentina; that independence was aided by the British Government of that time, in which Canning had such a significant influence.

The great game of football was introduced into this country of ours by British railwaymen, and some clubs still carry their English names.

Tennis, another very popular sport, was played at the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club and the Darling Tennis Club, among others. Similarly, polo was played at that old, respected club, Hurlingham, and rowing and golf were also popular.

We must not forget the Welsh, who formed a very close community, which, only the other day, celebrated 125 years, happy years, in the south of Argentina. Arriving in 1865, they settled in the valley of a river named Chubut, which later gave the name to a province of Patagonia, the south of the Argentine Republic. There they founded towns which bear their original names and schools which teach the Welsh language, and they were able to keep alive their original Welsh culture in an atmosphere of freedom. As Lewis Jones, the Welsh pioneer, put it, "We are all citizens and not only can we say how and who governs us but we can also be called upon to govern."

Last but not least are those who came from the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands to found ranches in the deep south of our country, where conditions for progress were more favourable than in the archipelago.

On 5 January 1885, on the instructions of the Argentine Government, the Governor of the Province of Santa Cruz, Carlos Maria Moyano, signed a contract with H. P. Wood & Co. for 200,000 hectares of land to be colonized by settlers from the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands.

(Mr. Thomson)

I should like to mention that over the years we have attended - I have done so personally - Falkland Islands patients brought to the British Hospital for attention that was not available in the Islands.

(Mr. Thomson)

Talking of the British Hospital, I should like to say that nursing was developed in my country, and to this day we have one of the best, if not the best, of the world's nursing schools, to which those Islanders who had to use our facilities can bear witness. That nursing school has just celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary.

All of the foregoing is intended to show that we are a large and old community if one includes the descendants of all those who came to help build a promising land, a land which, like any other, has had its growing pains but which has always respected liberty. But there is no doubt that this unfortunate dispute has affected our community, especially our business community.

The principles of liberty and respect for the individual and his rights are explicit in our Constitution, and these principles are repeated in the constitutions of our provinces. I should like to quote, because I thoroughly agree with him, what was said in the statement made by Mr. Raul Milton McBurney before the Fourth Committee of this Organization in November 1985:

> "Far from being a renouncement and a loss of fundamental values, the incorporation into the Argentine Republic of the Welsh and of us, their descendants, has meant for us the opening of a new horizon to live in dignity. This experience and testimony we want to share and inform of, not only to this Committee but in particular to the permanent population of the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands who are worried about the results of a negotiated solution in the dispute between Argentina and Great Britain and what it may mean to them."

(Mr. Thomson)

The world is becoming smaller, and it is no longer possible to maintain situations which cause tension and lead to isolation. The intention of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay to form an economic bloc such as the European one and Mr. Bush's initiative for the Americas mean that, for economic reasons, no isolated area can survive beside these initiatives.

These economic blocs bring in their train cultural ties and common defence issues, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the north. So I do not see any future for the Malvinas/Falklands without a solution to the political issue and their integration into the country of the region that rightfully claims them.

In this modern world I feel that practical details are of greater importance.

I shall not enter into the strategic arguments, which events change monthly if not daily. But on the one side we have a very large community with common roots living and working in Argentina, and on the other, in the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands, a small community with similar roots which has become estranged from the larger one, owing no doubt to unhappy political interests. They cannot remain tied to a distant country when they can have all the advantages that a sound political and economic settlement can provide through serious discussions between the countries involved.

I repeat therefore, I feel strongly that meaningful negotiations have to take place leading to an eventual, lasting solution for all. In a conflict of this nature British interests in Argentina itself and those of the permanent population of the Islands have much in common and therefore suffer. The latter in the long run have much to gain from a prompt solution, but could have much to lose otherwise.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Betts.

Mr. BETTS: I thank the Committee for agreeing to my addressing it on the matter of the Malvinas issue, which is the subject of a draft resolution here today. I speak as an Islander who was born in the colony and lived permanently in the community until eight years ago, when I moved to the town of Agua de Oro in the inland province of Cordoba on the Argentine mainland.

These years of residence among the cosmopolitan society of Argentina have meant that I have acquired many first-hand experiences of the life, customs, idiosyncrasies and traditions of its people that are largely unknown to my fellow Islanders. I can assure them that, contrary to the common belief in the colony, there is nothing to fear, nor are there enduring hardships, but much to be gained in accumulating this experience.

Among many other things, it has allowed me greatly to improve my standard of education, which has led to opening the way to work opportunities that would have been unthinkable if I had remained in the Islands. But the most important thing is that it effectively proved to me how untrue is the popular fallacy that exists in the isolated Malvinas community, where it is thought that owing to the linguistic, cultural and religious differences, integration between the two societies would be impossible to achieve. What is more, Mr. Thomson's statement just a few minutes ago has illustrated in far greater detail just how false this concept proves to be.

Furthermore, I am now able to appreciate fully how much the Malvinas mean to the common citizen of the mainland. These feelings are not limited to just a few nationalists but extend across the whole political spectrum and include all age groups from every level of Argentine's complex society.

(Mr. Betts)

On repeated occasions I have sat in this Committee and in meetings of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly and listened to petitions from Islanders serving in the colony's legislature, who presented a misleading popular image of the population of the archipelago as being a simple society, small in number, caught in the millstones of international power politics.

This presents a false image and misrepresents the composition of a community which, despite its size, is surprisingly diverse: Government employees, independent farmers, farm managers and labourers with distinct and often overlapping interests. This is compounded by the differences between residents of the only town and those of the rural district and between the expatriates and other nationals and born Islanders, as well as differences in income levels and education and in personal and family reputations.

In consequence, then, it is inexact to speak of a homogenous society of Islanders when referring to the inhabitants.

I should also add that, although privately often deeply critical of the United Kingdom Government and its handling of their affairs, they are reluctant to seem openly ungrateful or divided in their views and, while the vast majority of the inhabitants wish to see continued United Kingdom administration of the colony, there are at the same time undercurrents of distrust and insecurity, which have increased at this moment because of the renewal of relations between two countries that have enjoyed a tradition of friendship and commerce for more than a century.

That community, loosely termed "Islanders", should not lose sight of the fact that by reinstating diplomatic relations and re-establishing trade links the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom are simply exercising the rights of two civilized nations in compliance with exhortations of General

(Mr. Betts)

Assembly resolutions to discuss and, if possible, reach a compromise on all aspects of this ongoing and long-standing dispute.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome whole-heartedly the relaxation of attitudes between two countries that until a short time ago were diametrically opposed. At the same time, I am aware that this does not mean that the dispute is anywhere near resolution. The archipelago continues to be a colonial Territory under United Kingdom administration, technically described as a "small Territory", and the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom.

(Mr. Betts)

Petitioners from the Islands Legislative Council, in justification of their opposition to any definite solution to the sovereignty issue, have made it clear on more than one occasion that they have no wish to see the Islands decolonized, counter-arguing that they have the right to self-determination, refusing to accept the fact that United Nations resolutions have overruled the application of this principle in this particular case, since the applicable principle is that of territorial integrity.

It is useful to remember that this objection is based not simply on the size and composition of the Islands' population, as has been frequently insinuated, but rather on the jurisprudence interpretation that strict application of the right of self-determination in this dispute would be tantamount to reaffirming a colonial position and legitimizing the use of force and the consequent annexation of the Territory, which was the cause of the issue.

On the other hand, the Government of the Argentine Republic never signed away its rights of ownership to the archipelago but has, instead, consistently protested against what it considers the illegal and continuing United Kingdom occupation of a territory that is rightfully Argentine. Therefore the problem stubbornly refuses to go away.

But this does not imply that the Argentine Government is contemptuous of the interests, aspirations and illusions of the archipelago's inhabitants, which should be especially taken into account. However, to presume that those inhabitants should be the exclusive arbitrators in the solution of the dispute would make a mockery of the decolonization process and distort the nature of the principle of self-determination.

With this in mind, it is particularly gratifying for me, as a Falkland Islander, to see that the Argentine and United Kingdom Governments have called upon

(Mr. Betts)

their immense resources of mutual goodwill and indispensable spirit of comprehension and begun a process of reconciliation of their differences that will, it is to be hoped, culminate in a definitive solution to the issue between them, just as the United Nations has urged for so many years.

The CHAIRMAN: If no member wishes to make comments or put questions to the petitioners, they may now withdraw.

The petitioners withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will continue consideration of the item at its next meeting, with a view to taking action on draft resolution L.1743.

QUESTION OF NEW CALEDONIA (A/AC.109/1041 and A/AC.109/L.1744)

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to inform members that in connection with this item the Committee has received a request from the delegation of Vanuatu to be permitted to take part in the proceedings relating to New Caledonia. In accordance with established practice, if I hear no objection, I now invite the delegation of Vanuatu to take its place at the Committee table.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the delegation of Vanuatu took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a working paper prepared by the Secretariat, contained in document A/AC.109/1041. In addition, the Committee has before it a draft resolution on the item, contained in document L.1744.

Members will recall that at its 1363rd meeting on 1 August, the Committee granted requests for hearing relating to this item.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Rock Wamytan (Front de libération nationale Kanak socialiste (FLNKS)) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Wamytan.

Mr. WAMYTAN (interpretation from French): On behalf of the Front de libération nationale Kanak socialiste, I should like first to offer you, Sir, my congratulations on your re-election to the chairmanship of the Special Committee, which bears the heavy responsibility of dealing with decolonization problems. I should also like to welcome the other officers of the Committee, who are playing an active role in the work accomplished by the Committee for the emancipation of colonial peoples.

It is always a great honour for us to be heard in this venerable Chamber, a symbol of freedom for all people outraged and humiliated by systems of oppression that still exist in our world today. Please believe me when I say that we very much appreciate this favour extended to the Kanak people, one among many colonized peoples, in being given this opportunity to come here to express its hopes and aspirations.

On 14 December 1960, the General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in which it solemnly proclaimed:

> "the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations". (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), preamble)

The General Assembly also reaffirmed the broad principles of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the fundamental rights of human beings and the rights of peoples to self-determination. In addition, it declared that immediate steps must be taken to transfer all powers to the people of the colonial Territories and that all armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against these peoples must cease.

(Mr. Wamytan)

The adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) has made it possible to encourage the decolonization process throughout the world, and as a result of the joint efforts of the United Nations and the peoples engaged in struggle, some 60 States of all continents have now taken seats in the General Assembly, the most recent Member being Namibia, which has just liberated itself from apartheid, a system that was outlawed by the international community.

In the year 1990, which marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, FLNKS pays tribute to the Special Committee and to the United Nations for having carried out the lofty and delicate mission of bringing total emancipation to the peoples struggling to achieve freedom.

On the occasion of this thirtieth anniversary, I wish to thank the United Nations on behalf of the Kanak people for the invitation extended to FLNKS to participate in the work of the seminar held in Vanuatu from 4 to 10 May 1990, which marked the beginning of the Decade for the Elimination of Colonialism.

Nevertheless, this thirtieth anniversary cannot conceal some areas of shadow that still exist in the world. In more than 15 Non-Self-Governing Territories peoples continue to claim their right to self-determination and independence: in the Pacific, in the Caribbean, in the South Atlantic, in Africa. Most of these Non-Self-Governing Territories are scattered islands, and their geographical situation, low population density and lack of human and natural resources must not impede their exercise of the legitimate and inalienable rights to which colonized peoples are entitled. Similarly, the important political changes in the world in recent months, particularly in Eastern Europe and in Africa, must not becloud the

(Mr. Wamytan)

inescapable duty of the United Nations and the administering Powers to ensure that the obligations and responsibilities undertaken vis-à-vis those peoples are respected.

New Caledonia is one of those Non-Self-Governing Territories. After 150 years of colonialism, a colonial Power, France, the cradle of human rights, still exercises its sovereignty over the Kanak people, the colonized indigenous people of that Territory.

(Mr. Wamytan)

It is still important for us to recall the words of our late President, Jean-Marie Tjibaou speaking before the Fourth Committee on 12 October 1987, on the question of New Caledonia. He explained our understanding of the term "colonization" in this way:

"For my people, colonization is the theft of our soil, the theft of our country, the theft our our homeland, the theft of our sovereignty, the theft of our right of self-determination, the theft of our history as a people and the theft of our right to decide our own future. As a historical fact, colonization cannot be felt and lived in the same existential way by the usurper and by the usurped."

On 24 September 1853 the French Government took possession of New Caledonia and usurped Kanak sovereignty: French colonialism was under way. For the Kanak people it was particularly violent and had evil and disastrous effects on the economic, social and cultural organization of the Kanak people. The policy of cantonment, whereby the indigenous people were pushed into the interior and confined to sharply defined and closed reservations, had the direct result of opening great opportunities to new settlers, who came from France or were released from prison, to settle as stockmen and farmers. The aim of that policy was to eliminate the Kanak people or at least to marginalize it in order to make room for the policy of repopulating and colonizing the country.

The dignity of the Kanak people was no longer recognized; it fell victim to murder and colonial repression. Reduced to a minority, it was forced out of the country's political, economic and social life.

Resistance to this aggression took the form of a number of revolts. Since it losing its sovereignty, the Kanak people has always vigorously rejected the usurpation of its land and sovereignty. Our eventful history is dotted with

(Mr. Wamytan)

important dates marking bloody struggles: 1855, 1878, with High Chief Atai, and 1917, with High Chief Noel. And since 1953, with the emancipation movement among colonized peoples after the Second World War, the struggle has continued within the institutions of the Territory, for it was then that the Kanak people began to make effective use of the right to vote.

Throughout the past 30 years, the policy of the French colonial Government has been to strengthen the institutional links with France, despite the fact that the Kanak people had opted for emancipation and freedom. To oppose the colonial Power's attempts at integration and to ensure its own survival, the Kanak people organized itself and provided itself with an instrument: the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), the liberation movement and the sole legitimate representative of the Kanak people. The aim of FLNKS is independence and the struggle against colonialism. In 1984, to oppose the status that Georges Lemoine, the Socialist Minister for Overseas Departments and Territories, sought to impose on the Territory, it organized an active boycott of the elections. After the Fabius-Pisani status arrangement, to which FLNKS had agreed, we again had to fight the policy of negating the Kanak people, pursued by the then Minister, Bernard Pons, of the Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) Government of Jacques Chirac. That policy lamentably led to the tragic events of May 1988 at Ouvea, with the killing of 19 FLNKS militants and the imprisonment in France of 30 other individuals.

The recent events in New Caledonia since 16 April 1988 have caused the Government, under pressure from FLNKS and in the face of an explosive situation that is close to civil war, to undertake, by means of a dialogue mission, the talks that led to the negotiation of the Matignon accords.

(Mr. Wamytan)

The struggle waged by the Kanak people over these long years has been a national liberation struggle with the aim of achieving decolonization and independence for the country. That fact was recognized by the international community. By resolution 41/41 A, adopted on 2 December 1986, the General Assembly decided to restore New Caledonia to the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories to which the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was applicable. Moreover, at the eighth summit of non-aligned countries, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September 1986, it was decided to grant FLNKS observer status, a stage of natural transition in the advance of third world countries to independence. At the regional level, the seventeenth South Pacific Forum meeting, held at Suva, Fiji, in July 1986, considered the request of FLNKS for the Forum's help in restoring New Caledonia to the list of countries still to be decolonized. More recently, in March 1990, the Spearhead Group - Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu - included FLNKS as a full member of the Melanesian group. The fact is that during the annual meetings of those international organizations, FLNKS is always invited to speak and to reaffirm its legitimate nationalist claims.

The Matignon accords, signed in June 1988, between FLNKS, representing the Kanak people, the Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (RPCR), representing the right-wing consisting of settlers and immigrants, and the French Government, which currently holds Kanak sovereignty, were a result of a process in the country begun by FLNKS as part of the strategy of the liberation struggle. FLNKS views the Matignon accords as a minimum platform that includes the elements of consensus among the three partners. Without compromising their fundamental convictions, FLNKS, the RPCR and the French Government have thus signed an agreement which has three aspects:

(Mr. Wamytan)

First, it is a non-aggression pact aimed at stopping the cycle of violence and the hatred which led New Caledonia to the brink of civil war.

Secondly, it is a pact for sharing the political power but especially the economic power of those who hold the wealth of the country and who are in a position to make important decisions involving the economic development of the Territory.

Third, it is a pact committing the French Government to grant amnesty to political prisoners and to enact serious measures aimed at restoring balance in the Territory.

After 150 years of colonization, where Kanaks make up 74,000 of a population of 165,000 as of the last census, there is a great deal of catching up to do. In 1988, the year of the signing of the Matignon accords, the Kanak people had only one doctor, who was working in France, one magistrate, one graduate engineer, three administrative officers and no lawyers - and the list goes on. Similarly, our people has been virtually excluded from the economic system, with the vast majority living at a subsistence level in the country's reservations. The catastrophic management of the land problem by successive right-wing Governments led to fierce confrontation both between Kanaks and European settlers and among the Kanaks themselves.

In a word, everything still remained to be done when the Matignon accords were signed. There was the primary infrastructure to develop, sanitary and social facilities to set up, primary health care to reorganize, aspects of Kanak culture to promote, an economic fabric to create, especially in the interior of the islands, the general economy of the Territory to stabilize, dependence on the Metropolis to change, and so forth. So FLNKS signed the Matignon accords because

(Mr. Wamytan)

they gave it an opportunity to make up for the time lost during the long years of undiluted colonialism.

A new status was then proposed for the Territory - the latest in a long series initiated by successive French Governments. That status granted broad powers to the three provinces. It established bodies, such as the Rural Development and Land Management Agency (ADRAF), needed for implementing a truly equitable land policy as a means for the recognition and promotion of Kanak culture. It also set in place a system to accelerate the training of local workers. Lastly, with a view to enabling New Caledonia to be integrated into its Oceanian environment, statutory provisions opened possibilities for regional co-operation to benefit the Territory and its provinces.

Having kept the Kanaks in total ignorance of the way in which their country's affairs were conducted, the French Government finally gave them a new perspective through apprenticeships in management at the provincial level.

The Matignon accords are not enough for starting a true decolonization process for the Territory of New Caledonia. FLNKS has said, and it reiterates today, that the Matignon accords do not open a clear path towards the independence we seek. At the Gossanah Convention, on 23 July 1988, FLNKS rejected the Rocard plan and asked its political office to return to negotiations with the French Government on the substantive issues, in particular the following: amnesty for political prisoners, the electorate, revision of provincial boundaries and the duration of the plan.

(Mr. Wamytan)

The attempt at renegotiation failed because the Minister of Overseas Departments and Territories rejected the FLNKS request on 3 August 1988, stating that before any new proposal could be submitted to the Government, FLNKS must first obtain the agreement of the other signatory, RPCR.

Not being in agreement on the final outcome of the tripartite pact, RPCR and the French Government are betting on New Caledonia's remaining French after 1998, the date of the self-determination referendum. FLNKS's 1998 bet, on the other hand, is on independence for the Kanak people and the other communities living in the Territory, which FLNKS would by then attempt to convince that a common future is possible and that an "Oceanian" consciousness can emerge on the basis of these years of dialogue. Beyond this bet, FLNKS's basic claims remain unanswered for the time being, since nothing provided under the Matignon Accords can provide a clear answer to them.

The measures aimed at restoring balance, including training and land management, are being gradually implemented at present. But there remains a long road to travel before the objectives aimed at can be reached, and in any event, those measures are designed only to help the Kanak people catch up and to overcome its de facto marginalization, they do not ultimately enable it to gain the independence it seeks.

In the view of FLNKS, New Caledonia is on the list of countries that must be decolonized, and accordingly, all the logical consequences must be drawn from that fact

New Caledonia's destiny is independence, and the Kanak people, a colonized indigenous people, is convinced that under the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the process of liberation is irresistible and irreversible.

(Mr. Wamytan)

Accordingly, the French Government has an obligation to initiate a genuine process of decolonization, making every effort to prepare the Territory for accession to independence. To FLNKS, restoration of the Kanak people's sovereignty is not negotiable. The only things that can be negotiated are the means and stages of that restoration.

The sanction for that genuine decolonization process will be the self-determination referendum. In the view of FLNKS, that referendum must be organized in accordance with the principles and practices of the United Nations, and the only ones who should vote in it are the Kanak people, the victims of history. Only on that condition can the self-determination referendum be a genuine decolonization referendum.

The acceptance of any other concept of an electorate could be viewed as indicating that the Kanak people, as a colonized people, accept de facto the waves of immigrants who came to the Territory as a result of a voluntarist policy designed to drown out the Kanak people's claim to independence.

Thus FLNKS appeals to the United Nations to call upon the French Government to undertake the decolonization of the Territory and to comply with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

FLNKS urges the United Nations to keep New Caledonia on the list of countries to be decolonized. We would regard any attempt to remove it from that list as a negation of the steps taken up to now and therefore a negation of the fundamental claims of the Kanak people.

We do not want to be the forgotten people of the history of decolonization. For that reason, we would also like a United Nations mission to come to New Caledonia in order to follow the course of the process undertaken and to monitor the extent to which that process can lead to the independence of the Territory.

(Mr. Wamytan)

Let me express here the hope that the Special Committee will be able to take account of the resolution of the 21st Pacific Forum on the question of New Caledonia and that special attention will be given to the proposals made by the seminar on decolonization held in Vanuatu, in particular the proposal relating to the creation of a regional office.

In addition, we hope that information can be regularly furnished by the administering Power concerning the situation of New Caledonia, under Article 73 e of the Charter.

Lastly, I wish to express FLNKS's support of and solidarity with all oppressed peoples struggling for their freedom and to express officially the gratitude of the Kanak people to the fraternal countries of the Pacific Forum for their support, as well as to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Of course, speaking in this chamber, I also express our thanks to the United Nations delegations that have always supported us by their statements and by their votes.

Once more, Mr. Chairman, I express to you the full gratitude of the Kanak people for the support given to the case of New Caledonia, and I reiterate that people's confidence in the United Nations. The United Nations remains a sure guarantor of the Kanak people against being forgotten, against negation and intolerance in its advance towards dignity and sovereignty.

Lastly, for the information of the Committee, I shall submit to the Secretariat a number of technical documents relating to the establishment of the provincial institutions for which FLNKS is responsible, relating to the province of Nord, of course, but also to the province of Loyauté, whose President,

(Mr. Wamytan)

Mr. Richard Caloy, is with me today. I hope that those documents will help the Committee better to monitor the implementation of the Matignon Accords in the two provinces under our control.

Mr. Wamytan withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Yann Celene Uregei (Front uni de liberation Kanak (FULK)) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Uregei.

Mr. UREGEI (Front uni de liberation Kanak (FULK)) (interpretation from French): On behalf of the Front uni de liberation Kanak (FULK) I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, as also the other members of the Bureau, on your assumption of your offices. Your re-election as Chairman of the Committee shows the unanimous confidence you enjoy in the Committee as a result of your devotion and personal attachment to the decolonization problems that fall within your area of competence. You have shown yourself to be indefatigable in your search for solutions in regard to the movement of New Caledonia towards independence.

I should also like to congratulate the members of the Committee, who have never failed in their responsibility in the noble task of working for the liberation of peoples still under colonial domination.

For the reasons already stated before this Committee, the Rocard plan does not guarantee Kanak independence. That is recognized by all, including FLNKS, signatory of the Matignon agreement.

The Kanak people is caught in the trap of Rocard, of Lafleur and of several FLNKS leaders who have assumed the heavy responsibility of trapping the Kanak people in a 10-year plan in exchange for several functional indemnities to be received from the new provincial institutions. French colonialism has succeeded in neutralizing the Kanak people in their liberation struggle and shutting them into

(Mr. Uregei)

the 10-year plan using the FLNKS leaders, who are dazzled by money and comfort. The salary of a simple elected provincial official - more than $5,000 a month - is twice as large as the monthly indemnities of the Prime Minister of Vanuatu.

The French Government has deep-rooted political reasons for insisting that the 10-year plan be applied at all costs in order to maintain the French colonial presence in New Caledonia and the South Pacific region. This results from the tremendous interests acquired by French imperialism in the region, which has become a new world centre. The French imperialists feel it necessary to move New Caledonia towards the status of association with France by ensuring that the decolonization provided for in the plan remains within the colonial framework of the French Republic.

(Mr. Uregei)

That 10-year plan is in accordance with the colonialist anti-independence policy of Jacques Lafleur and the Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (RPCR), representing the main bulwark of French colonialism in the country. Through the redistricting of the country, Lafleur regains the central region and the important economic zones between Noumea and Poya, encompassing over half the territory. The duration of the plan benefits his capitalist interests and strengthens colonialism. The opening of the Common Market in 1992 and the integration of New Caledonia into a tropical Europe can only contribute to the strengthening of his policy and thus to colonialism. The anti-independence electorate set for the 1988 self-determination vote is one of the conditions imposed by RPCR for the acceptance of the signing of the Matignon Accords.

What are the interests of the signatories to FLNKS's Matignon Accords in that plan? FLNKS has taken the position that the Rocard plan does not guarantee the fundamental claims of the Kanak people. FLNKS disapproves of the redistricting of the country because that redistricting does not respect Kanak cultural areas and it disapproves of the 10-year period because it extends beyond the lifetime of the present legislature.

FLNKS disapproves of the proposed electorate, which it regards as the corner-stone of the plan, claiming that it will give the anti-independence option a majority of 64 per cent in the 1998 self-determination vote. We thus find that the Accords are negative for FLNKS across the board and that FLNKS has fallen into Rocard's trap.

After only one year of implementation, the balance-sheet of the Matignon Accords has resulted in the demobilization of the Kanak people in its struggle for liberation. The FLNKS components that signed the Matignon Accords, such as the Union Calédonienne, the Parti de Libération Kanak (Palika) and the Union Progressiste Mélanesienne, in their respective congresses, have recognized that

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there has been demobilization among the Kanak people, as if the experience of the implementation of the Pisani plan were not enough to make them understand that to continue on that course is automatically to produce demobilization of the Kanak people in its liberation struggle. How can the signatories of the Matignon Accords still dare to complain that the house is on fire when they are the very ones who set fire to it? They have made the Kanak people prisoners of the Matignon Accords for 10 years.

The implementation of the Matignon Accords is accompanied by the presence of thousands of troops stationed throughout the territory of New Caledonia. A system of political and judicial repression has been set up by the Rocard Government against democracy and those who have a different point of view or who trouble the signers of the Matignon Accords. In this connection, we must denounce the great media campaign being carried on by the French Government about the Matignon Accords and its publicity blitz on the subject of elected officials in the three provinces.

But just what is the situation after one year of mobilization within the provincial institutions? It is quite negative. The diagnosis is one of failure, reflected in the disintegration of the Kanak people's struggle, in the corruption of people being paid without working, in the large-scale integration of European civil servants and officials in the provinces, particularly in the province of the Loyalty Islands, in the allocation of land by the Agence de développement rural et d'aménagement foncier (ADRAF), which remains a dead letter, in the training of cadres, which is a moot point, in development which is not suited to the circumstances and benefits only big business, in the resurgence of alcoholism among our youth since the implementation of the Matignon Accords, in the provincial funding being used to pay for luxury homes with swimming pools for provincial Kanak leaders, and in an increase in immigration, with the presence of many foreigners in

(Mr. Uregei)

the provinces. The problem of restoring balance, still given only lip-service, is far from being solved.

This balance-sheet of development only confirms the position taken by the Kanak United Liberation Front (FULK). We believe that there is no true development without independence and that trying to put the cart before the horse in that regard is simply to consolidate a development which is dependent, thus promoting the maintenance of French colonialism.

We must also denounce the internal scheming in the provincial institutions of some political parties in FLNKS and the colonialist right, which have acquired control in the three provinces. That close collaboration between the political leaders who signed the Matignon Accords is reflected in Nord Province's recent acquisition of the mining holdings of the Société Minière du Pacifique Sud, a corporation belonging to Jacques Lafleur, and which, through Kanak intermediaries, cost metropolitan taxpayers $18 million. Those same mining holdings had been purchased by the company in 1987 for $5 million, so that it made a profit of $12 million without paying any debts. Why did Lafleur find no private buyers when there are many large foreign investment companies interested in mining?

Those are the specifics of how, in the name of redistricting and thanks to the Matignon Accords, Lafleur, that great exploiter of the country, supported by Rocard, was able to take advantage of the situation by using inexperienced Kanak leaders. At the time of the municipal elections, we already noted the marriage between the Union Calédonienne and RPCR. Such political scheming is a threat to the independence movement vis-à-vis the fundamental claims of the Kanak people, because it can lead to an independence of the Rhodesian type or towards the status of a State associated with France which FULK has consistently denounced and condemned.

(Mr. Uregei)

FULK wishes to stress at this point the heavy responsibility FLNKS must bear for its contradictory policy at the regional and international levels. FLNKS, which itself recognizes that the Matignon Accords do not guarantee Kanak independence, is calling for regional and international support for that contradictory policy, which ultimately plays into the hands of the colonial Government, RPCR and certain countries of the region that would like to see the situation perpetuated for the sake of their own national interests. FLNKS is the only party responsible for that contradictory policy, and it must change its position vis-à-vis the Matignon Accords because it is not logical that FLNKS should go before international bodies asking them to support independence for New Caledonia while FLNKS itself supports the Rocard plan, which does not guarantee Kanak independence. International support thus founders in the Matignon Accords, which are harmful to New Caledonia's independence.

As regards the balance-sheet of the implementation of the Matignon Accords one year later, it is high time for FLNKS to redefine its position. Before the meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Vanuatu, we had agreed with the Government of Vanuatu to work together to find a new strategy, but FLNKS, too involved in the provincial institutions, did everything possible to avoid a joint meeting that would enable us to establish a plan for unity and independence outside of the Matignon Accords, to be submitted to the twenty-first South Pacific Forum. At the end of the Forum, the question of observer status for FLNKS was brought up, but the contradiction created by FLNKS's position provided an opportunity for certain countries in the region to suggest observer status for RPCR, a signatory of the Matignon Accords, as well. We wish to reaffirm here that the Matignon Accords represent the plan of

(Mr. Uregei)

French colonialism, and thus it is urgent that FLNKS should present to international opinion its plan for unity and independence in order to make international support more effective and to justify its position, which for the present remains contradictory and favourable to the maintenance of colonialism.

(Mr. Uregei)

In France, within the Socialist Party itself, the consensus policy of Michel Rocard, the promoter of the Matignon Agreement, is being contested more and more in his own camp, and it cannot be ruled out that Prime Minister Rocard will abandon his own plan before 1998.

Since we have been coming before the Special Committee and before the Fourth Committee, the position of the Front Uni de libération Kanak (FULK) has not changed. We condemn the Matignon Agreement and we support the proposals of the Front de libéracion nationale kanak socialiste (FLNKS) to adjust the texts of the Agreement in order to guarantee Kanak independence, particularly with respect to the electoral body and the duration of the plan. We support also the consensus reached on 10 May at Port Vila between the Government of Vanuatu, FLNKS and FULK for the establishment of a plan for unity and independence outside the Matignon Agreement. I would draw the Committee's attention to the importance of this new initiative, which could facilitate the Committee's task and make international support more effective - and hence, make the decolonization of New Caledonia more effective. The Front Uni de libération Kanak, which remains the only party in FLNKS that continues to work for the application of the charter for the liberation struggle of FLNKS, is ready and willing to co-operate with the other components of FLNKS in order to find a new common strategy vis-à-vis the Matignon Agreement.

Mr. Uregei withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded the hearings on this item. On behalf of the Committee and on my own behalf, I express appreciation to the petitioners for their statements and for the information they have furnished the Committee.

Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji): My delegation is happy to see the representative of FLNKS, Mr. Rock Wamytan, with us again this year, as well as Mr. Yann Celene Uregei from FULK, and I thank them both for their statements. The views on the situation in New Caledonia held by FLNKS, as the recognized representative body of the Kanak people, should be a major factor in the consideration of this item by the Special Committee.

I wish to anticipate, and fully associate my delegation with, the statement on the question of New Caledonia which will be made by the Permanent Representative of Vanuatu on behalf of the members of the South Pacific forum that are Members of the United Nations. Our leaders met in Vanuatu only two weeks ago, and New Caledonia was an important item on their agenda.

I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution in document A/AC.109/L.1744 on the question of New Caledonia, which is submitted by my delegation. The draft has the full support of the seven South Pacific Forum countries that are Members of the United Nations - Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji.

For the past two years the situation in New Caledonia has been characterized by dialogue, consultation and co-operation between the various parties. In support of that process, the purpose of the elements that have been used in formulating a draft resolution is to reinforce the positive trends which have been established and which aim at an act of self-determination for the people of New Caledonia.

The present draft resolution follows the same objectives as were laid down in 1988 and 1989. It continues to endorse the spirit of dialogue and co-operation adopted by the people of New Caledonia and the administering Power in accordance with the Matignon and Rue Oudinot Agreements. It commends the constructive spirit which has underpinned the valuable progress that has been made. And it calls for continuing this approach.

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

As in the past, much thought and effort have gone into crafting the draft resolution which is before the Special Committee. In drafting the text we have been guided primarily by the interests of the people of New Caledonia. We have sought to be realistic, positive and constructive.

In respectfully putting the draft resolution to the members of the Special Committee I should like to emphasize that an important consideration we have taken into account has been to consolidate the progress already made. It is our belief that the confidence-building which has developed so well between the people of New Caledonia, and particularly the indigenous Kanaks, and the administering Power will enable the act of self-determination to be carried out in conditions that will provide as stable a future for New Caledonia as possible.

I commend the draft resolution to all members of the Special Committee and urge its unanimous adoption.

Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): Before I begin my prepared statement, I should like to digress slightly and through you, Mr. Chairman, express to the members of the Special Committee and the members of the Secretariat the appreciation of the Government and people of Vanuatu for the decision to hold the decolonization seminar in Port Vila, Vanuatu, this past May. We are grateful that members of the Committee and of the Secretariat travelled such a great distance, taking so many hours, and then spent so many hours of hard work once they arrived in Port Vila in conducting the seminar. We assure the Committee again not only of our appreciation but of our willingness to co-operate with it in all its future endeavours.

I have the honour and privilege of speaking today on behalf of the seven countries that are members of the South Pacific Forum and are also Members of the United Nations - Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

At the outset, we congratulate the Chairman on his re-election to lead the work of the Special Committee of 24; we also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their respective elections. We assure them of our continued co-operation and support, as the United Nations continues in its important endeavour to help shape a world which is free of any form of colonialism and which celebrates our common humanity.

As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, we believe it is appropriate to reflect on how far mankind has traveled since the days when colonialism was the rule rather than the exception. We believe it is also appropriate to give very careful thought and consideration to the unique circumstances and characteristics of the world's remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. This is particularly true as we begin the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

It is our hope that this Decade will be in keeping with the current positive atmosphere surrounding the work of the United Nations. Perhaps never before in its history has the United Nations been as close to realizing its capabilities as it is today. Thus, we view this Decade as an opportunity to advance further the lofty ideals of the Charter, and finally to bring to an end the system known to us all as colonialism.

The countries of the South Pacific take a great deal of interest in the work of the Special Committee. Our region is one which is known to contain many of the world's remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. Thus, the continued effective work of the Committee is of great importance to us, and to the future of those peoples in the South Pacific that have not yet had the opportunity to determine their own destinies.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Recently, the Heads of Government of the countries members of the South Pacific Forum met in Port Vila, Vanuatu. At that meeting the Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to the decolonialization process in accordance with the principles and practices of the United Nations. They also discussed at length the situation in New Caledonia, and reviewed developments in that Non-Self-Governing Territory. The Forum

"... noted the positive measures ... [being] pursued in New Caledonia by the French authorities, in co-operation with all sectors of the population, to promote political, economic, and social development in the Territory, in order to provide a framework for its peaceful evolution to self-determination".

There was also an acknowledgement of

"... the close links which exist between the people of New Caledonia, particularly the indigenous Kanaks, and other peoples of the South Pacific ...".

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Throughout the discussion on New Caledonia, the Forum Heads of Government continually stressed the need to maintain a harmonious dialogue in the Territory itself, the positive actions of all the parties in this regard and the vital role of the United Nations in the decolonization process. As it has in the past, the subject of New Caledonia occupied a major portion of the time and attention of the leaders of the South Pacific countries.

Turning our attention to draft resolution A/AC.109/L.1744, now before the Committee, we, the seven South Pacific Forum members that are also members of the United Nations, recall that last year and the year before, the Committee, and subsequently the General Assembly, adopted similar texts on New Caledonia by consensus. We note that, as in the most recent past, the draft text contains many of the key elements of the concerns of the countries of the South Pacific.

The draft text certainly does not contain everything we should like it to contain. Like most draft resolutions, it is the product of compromise and moderation, as is the very process of decolonization itself. We unreservedly support the draft and urge its adoption by consensus. It is our belief that the consensus adoption of this text will enhance the process of building confidence and mutual respect that is now under way in New Caledonia. Thus the Committee will enable the United Nations to make a further contribution to the political evolution and decolonization of that South Pacific Territory, whose people are an integral part of the South Pacific community.

We thank the Committee for its attention. We thank it and its member countries for their time and tireless dedication to the cause of decolonization. We hope that New Caledonia will, some day soon, give us cause to celebrate yet another achievement in mankind's steady and irrreversible march towards the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no further speakers, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/AC.109/L.1744.

Does any member wish to speak on the draft resolution? It appears not. May I take it that the Committee is prepared to adopt the draft resolution without a vote?

Draft resolution A/AC.109/L.1744 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to thank the members of the South Pacific Forum that are members of the United Nations for their continued endeavours, which enabled the Committee to arrive at a consensus decision in connection with this item.

The Committee has thus concluded its consideration of this item.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning, I wish to inform members that there will be open-ended informal consultations beginning at 3 o'clock this afternoon in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

I wish also to inform members that at our meeting tomorrow the Committee will take action on the draft resolution on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and commence its consideration of the item entitled "Special Committee decision of 17 August 1989 concerning Puerto Rico". I appeal to delegations to be punctual, as a large number of petitioners will be appearing before the Committee.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held tomorrow at 10 o'clock.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.